



Ned Lamont  
Governor

## STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

### OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER



Angel Quiros  
Commissioner

### **CT Department of Correction Testimony concerning Senate Bill 334**

Representatives Lemar and Carney, Senators Haskell and Somers and the members of the Transportation Committee, the Department of Correction (DOC) is submitting this testimony concerning Senate Bill 334, An Act Establishing A Program To Make Preparing For And Taking The Commercial Learner Permit Knowledge Test Available For Incarcerated Persons.

The Department is very supportive of assisting inmates in obtaining Commercial Drivers Licenses. In fact, DOC has recently submitted CDL training as one of the vocations as part of our plan for a Vocational Village, which is using \$20 million in federal American Relief Plan Act monies dedicated by the General Assembly and the Governor. DOC modeled this plan on Michigan's successful Vocational Village program, which includes CDL training.

For the Committee's benefit, the Department of Correction is in the final stages of providing computer tablets to all inmates. For safety and security, these tablets will not have internet access. However, assuming the CDL training materials are geared towards the educational level of most inmates, they might be able to be included in the resources available on the tablets.

Concerning the proposals included in Senate Bill 334, DOC is committed to working with the Department of Motor Vehicles, the Office of Workforce Strategy, and this committee in developing a workable proposal. However, establishing a virtual CDL knowledge testing program in all DOC facilities has several challenges including security, internet and space capacity as well as staffing. DOC is in the process of providing inmates access to the Department of Labor's CT Hires job site and there have been numerous logistical issues over many months. In addition, as legislators know, both agencies are facing staffing disruptions due to the impending retirements of state employees due to the change in the state employee pension plan to be implemented this July 1<sup>st</sup>. As a result, the timelines contained in the bill are not realistic.

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